



Fast Facts

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

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DHS RECORD ON BREAST CANCER

In California, an estimated 20,000 women are diagnosed with breast cancer each year, and, on average, 13 women die from breast cancer each day. The Department of Health Services (DHS) understands the severity of this disease and has worked to enact programs that address breast cancer prevention, early detection, education, and research.

Significant Legislation

- Legislation signed in 1992 created a check-off on state income tax forms for Californians to contribute to breast cancer research.
- Legislation signed in 1993 established the Breast Cancer Early Detection Program (BCEDP), an effort to improve access to breast cancer screening and diagnostic services for low-income, uninsured women throughout California.
- The Breast Cancer Act of 1993 raises more than \$30 million annually through a two cent per pack cigarette tax. Half of these funds are used for breast cancer research, and the other half for screening and detection.
- Since 1991, DHS has provided services through the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP) with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Legislation signed in 2000 established breast cancer treatment for poor, uninsured people in years when an appropriation is identified for that purpose.

Helping Underserved Women

Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer and the second leading cause of death for women in California. While there is no known way to prevent breast cancer, early detection through clinical breast examinations and mammography is the best way to reduce mortality. All women age 40 and over should be getting regular clinical breast exams and mammograms, yet many lack the resources or may not know where to get these vital services.

DHS helps underserved women increase the chances of finding breast cancer early and successfully fighting it by providing screening, diagnostic, and treatment services at no cost, and patient education and support through 14 regional Breast Cancer Partnerships. DHS also provides a toll-free number in six languages that refers women for breast cancer screening services to providers in their local community.

The Governor's Budget

The Governor's budget sustains the BCEDP growth achieved in past years and supports continuation of the expanded quality improvement efforts initiated in 1998-99. Resources will provide access to screening services for a projected caseload of 260,000 women in 2000-01. The budget provides approximately \$35 million for screening and diagnostic services and \$20 million for treatment.